MIDNIGHT SPECIAL

by

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4000 Warner Boulevard
Burbank, California 91522

March 25, 2013
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FADE IN:

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DUSK

Fingers pull back a thick strip of duct tape covering the peephole on a motel room door. LUCAS (38), a stocky guy with a military haircut, presses his eye against it.

He turns to address the room.

LUCAS
It's time.

ROY (38), an imposing figure, sits on the end of the motel bed. He references Lucas with a nod as he slips a Kevlar vest over his head.

As Roy snaps closed a .410 shotgun, Lucas begins taking down SHEETS OF CARDBOARD that have been duct taped over the large window next to the door.

Roy buttons a shirt over the vest all the way to the collar and finally takes note of the local news that has been running on the television in front of him.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)
... the boy was last seen near San Angelo, Texas. Although we have no photo of him at this time, the state police say his name is Alton Meyer, a white, eight-year-old boy with brown hair and brown eyes who is reported to have been kidnapped two nights ago by this man, Roy Tillar...

A PHOTO of Roy is shown on the screen. It is a cropped, blown-up image of a slightly younger Roy. He's smiling.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)
... He is said to be armed and extremely dangerous. If you have any information for police please contact them at...

Dismissing the news program, Roy stands and tucks a .9mm pistol into the back of his pants. He walks to the side of the bed and kneels down.

ALTON (8) is on the floor with his back against the nightstand and a bedsheet draped over his head. He silently studies a comic book in his lap.

CONTINUED:

He wears TINTED SWIMMING GOGGLES and FAT ORANGE HEADPHONES; they are ear protection like you would see at a firing range.

Alton smiles when he sees Roy, who taps his own ear, referencing Alton's headset. Alton removes them.

ROY
It's time. Are you ready?

ALTON
Yeah.

ROY
Better leave the bedsheet.

Alton slips the sheet off his head and lets the headphones hang around his neck. Roy gently picks the boy up and cradles him on his hip. He grabs the shotgun, a duffle bag, and motions to Lucas.

ROY
Okay.

Lucas, with the cardboard pieces under one arm and his own pistol tucked into the back of his jeans, opens the door.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION - EVENING

It's a one-level rundown motel by the interstate. The sun has just finished setting.

Lucas steps out of the room and quickly scans the parking lot. He opens up his body to let Roy walk by with Alton.

They move in a group, Lucas on guard, toward a black '69 CHEVELLE parked nearby. The rusty car has some body damage with gun metal gray patches, but it still looks fast.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

A female CLERK (59) slouches over a bag of potato chips at the front desk. Her eyes drift from a small TV playing the evening news to the parking lot outside.

She sees Roy putting Alton in the backseat of the car.

Her posture straightens with recognition. She bounces a look to the TV and then back to the car.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Lucas throws the pieces of cardboard into the trunk and slams down the lid. He moves quick to the driver's door.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The Clerk watches the Chevelle pull out of the parking lot. She grabs the phone.

INT./EXT. CHEVELLE/TEXAS INTERSTATE/BACK ROAD - EVENING

Headlights charge forward as the car builds speed on the interstate.

It gradually settles in with the flow of traffic as the last signs of daylight leave the sky.

INSIDE THE CAR

A POLICE SCANNER mounted on the dash squawks intermittently. Lucas drives with Roy in the passenger seat.

Alton bounces in the back belted onto the middle hump of the bench seat. He attempts to read the comic with a Maglite.

POLICE DISPATCH (V.O.)
(from the scanner)
Attention all units for a wanted person broadcast. Be on the lookout for a 1969 Chevrolet Chevelle, primer gray in color bearing Texas license plate AG20159 driven by two white males...

Lucas eyes Roy and motions to the glove box.

LUCAS
Pop that open.

Roy opens the glove box as Lucas quickly cuts across two lanes of traffic to make the nearest off-ramp.

POLICE DISPATCH (V.O.)
(from the scanner)
... heading eastbound on I-30. Subjects are known to carry firearms.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POLICE DISPATCH (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Any unit coming into contact hold and notify. Central clear 19:02.

The car sails up the ramp and veers onto a dimly-lit two-lane back road.

LUCAS
Hand me the goggles.

Roy pulls a pair of NIGHT VISION GOGGLES out of the glove box, briefly studying them as he hands them over.

Lucas slides on the elastic goggles, leaving the lenses propped on his forehead as he reaches under the dash.

He struggles for a moment before yanking a wire loose.

ALL OF THE VEHICLE'S LIGHTS GO DARK.

Headlights, taillights, instrument panel.

The only light left is Alton's bobbing Maglite. Lucas lowers the goggles over his eyes and activates them.

LUCAS
Kill the light, Alton.

He does with a click. The interior goes pitch black.

Lucas punches the gas.

The car rumbles toward top speed, quickly falling out of sight down the dark country road.

SUPERIMPOSE: MIDNIGHT SPECIAL

EXT. THIRD HEAVEN RANCH - NIGHT

The ranch is built on flat, open land that's been cleared of brush. It's dark, save for sodium lights hanging off small metal buildings that dot the community.

The buildings, austere in their design, are lined up like bunk houses around a much larger two-story building at the center of the ranch. It looks like a giant metal barn.

DOZENS OF MEMBERS sporadically file out of the houses and make their way toward the large building.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

CALVIN MEYER (58) sits behind a mahogany desk. Red carpet runs throughout the well-appointed office.

Standing behind him are two serious-looking men. The older, DOAK (52), and the younger, LEVI (27). They wear gray suits and stare intently at a television playing the nightly news.

This program is different from the one at the motel, but it concerns the same Amber Alert for Alton.

LEVI
Did the ranch put this out?

CALVIN
No. This is something else.

Calvin stands and turns to the men. He hugs Levi, pulling away with a smile. He motions the young man to a door.

Levi exits the room. Left alone, Calvin moves to Doak and rests a hand on his shoulder.

CALVIN
What you do now will decide our way of life. He won't let him go easily. Do you understand?

Doak nods.

CALVIN
The Lord has placed a heavy burden on you.

The men look at each other, genuine admiration shared between them. Calvin turns and exits the room. Doak follows.

INT. THIRD HEAVEN RANCH SANCTUARY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Calvin's office opens directly onto the stage in front of a church sanctuary, complete with pews, red carpet, and pulpit.

There is an energy in the room provided by the nearly 400 MEMBERS that are gathered inside.

The men and boys all wear suits with ties, but the women wear traditional dresses, like milkmaids. Their hair in a bun.

CONTINUED:

Calvin takes his place behind the pulpit as Doak settles on a bench behind him. He opens a binder already placed on the lectern and addresses the congregation.

CALVIN
Peace be to you.

CONGREGATION
(in unison)
And to you.

CALVIN
We'll begin with a reading from March 17th, 2011.
(reading from the binder)
Gulf Eclipse. And the numbers came: 35, 47, 97, 52.

CALVIN
Buildings tower. The light comes. To know the source of such...

EXT. THIRD HEAVEN RANCH - NIGHT

The ranch feels deserted with all of the members gathered inside the sanctuary.

Quietly, A DOZEN FBI AGENTS in full tactical gear emerge from the darkness of the surrounding fields. They fan out amongst the bunkhouses, clearing each building as they go.

A TRAIN OF SCHOOL BUSES kick up dust as they weave their way toward the center of the ranch. The rumble of their approaching engines growing louder.

ANOTHER GROUP OF AGENTS, some in tactical gear and others in the standard FBI Windbreakers, surround the sanctuary.

INT. THIRD HEAVEN RANCH SANCTUARY - NIGHT

Calvin is in the middle of his sermon. The members sit attentive, unaware of the events outside.

CALVIN
... These words are a reminder that our futures are guided by a plan, unknown to us, but there nonethe...

Calvin is interrupted by the doors at the back of the sanctuary.

CONTINUED:

AGENT MILLER (42), wearing the FBI Windbreaker, enters and makes his way up the aisle toward the pulpit.

The members begin to stir as they notice OTHER AGENTS in tactical gear flanking the exits.

Agent Miller, with a folded paper in his hands, walks directly up to Calvin. Doak stands, but Miller is undeterred and whispers something in Calvin's ear.

Agent Miller steps back and waits.

CALVIN
Friends. These men are from the federal government. Please listen carefully to what they have to say.

Calvin recedes, allowing Agent Miller to take his place.

AGENT MILLER
Please remain calm. We are agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. We have a warrant to search the premises and detain all members of the Third Heaven Ranch. There are buses waiting outside to transport you to the National Guard Armory in San Angelo. If you'll please exit the building in an orderly fashion there will be further details given to you at our destination.

More AGENTS enter the sanctuary and begin posting up at the end of pews. The members slowly comply with the instructions and begin filing outside, a dull murmur throughout.

EXT. THIRD HEAVEN RANCH SANCTUARY - NIGHT

With direction from the agents, ranch members begin boarding the school buses idling outside.

INT./EXT. CHEVELLE/COUNTRY ROAD/INTERSECTION - NIGHT

The Chevelle sails through the turns on a winding country road, still cloaked in the dark.

INSIDE THE CAR

Lucas focuses on navigating the road ahead, the occasional passing headlights flaring his goggles. Roy is glued in his seat, nervously watching dark pines fly past outside.

ROY
Are we good?

LUCAS
Better to get across the state line.

ROY
We've passed three counties. I'd like to slow down.

Lucas relents, easing his foot off the gas. He raises the goggles to his forehead and reaches under the dash as Roy lets out a slow breath.

They approach the intersection of a tiny one-light town. As their headlights come on --

A CAR PULLS OUT IN FRONT OF THEM.

ROY
Lucas!

Lucas pops his head up and turns the wheel hard. They fall into a skid that skirts them across the gravel shoulder, narrowly missing the other car. Then --

SMASH!

The other car, having stopped in the road, is struck by an oncoming PICKUP TRUCK.

This violently spins the car around as the pickup shutters to a stop, its front end collapsed.

IN THE CHEVELLE

Alton is pressed against the back window watching. Lucas, without hesitating, jumps out and runs toward the accident.

ROY
Alton, stay down.

AT THE WRECKED CAR

The DRIVER, a woman, is unconscious, slouched over the steering wheel. Blood streams down her face. Lucas arrives and examines her through the shattered car window.

LUCAS
(yelling back to Roy)
She's hurt bad!

A mile down, Lucas sees headlights pull out onto the highway. They speed toward them. Then --

BLUE LIGHTS FLASH. IT'S A TEXAS STATE TROOPER APPROACHING.

Lucas presses his shirt against the woman's head trying to control the bleeding. He sees the Trooper skid to a stop and get out of his vehicle.

Lucas looks to the Chevelle but doesn't move.

LUCAS
(to the Trooper)
Call for an ambulance! She has a bad wound to her head!

The Trooper, a younger officer, makes a quick move back to his car when he hesitates, noticing the Chevelle idling on the opposite shoulder.

Lucas watches the Trooper's face studying the car.

The Trooper turns his body, getting a better look. His hand slowly raises to the holster at his hip.

Lucas pulls his own pistol as if by reflex.

LUCAS
Don't.

The Trooper flinches when he sees Lucas drawing down on him.

ROY (O.S.)
Shoot him!

Their heads snap to the Chevelle, where Roy stands with his shotgun leveled at the Trooper.

LUCAS
Get back in the car!

CONTINUED:

ROY
Alton is more important!

LUCAS
Get back in the car!

The Trooper's eyes follow their exchange.

ROY
Shoot him!

LUCAS
I've got this...

The Trooper sees an opening and pulls his weapon. Lucas FIRES TWO RAPID SHOTS into the Trooper's chest.

His body falls limp on the ground. Lucas sprints over, kicks away the Trooper's gun and grabs the radio off his shoulder.

LUCAS
(into the radio)
Shots fired, officer down. Send medical 10-18. Country road 36 one mile east of marker 87.

Lucas takes the walkie off the Trooper's belt and runs back to their car.

Doors barely closed, the Chevelle peels out, leaving an eerily-quiet scene in its wake.

INT. CHEVELLE (BACK ROAD) (MOVING) - NIGHT

The car is quiet save for the low rumble of the motor.

Alton sits in the back with tears welling up, he's scared. Roy reaches a hand back and takes hold of Alton's knee.

ROY
Everything's fine, Alton. Buckle yourself in.

ALTON
I heard a gunshot.

ROY
We're fine.

Alton looks to Lucas, who is stone-faced.

CONTINUED:

ROY
It's okay. Settle down. You want your comics?

Alton nods. Roy reaches behind the seat and pulls out a stack. Alton takes them, still processing things.

Roy looks to Lucas, who is obviously upset.

ROY
He had on a vest.

LUCAS
You don't know that.

ROY
You did the right thing. He's more important.

LUCAS
Well. You didn't just shoot a state trooper.

Alton watches them as the car charges on.

EXT. NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY - NIGHT

Members from the ranch are guided off the buses into a large gymnasium at the center of the Armory.

The buildings are relics of the '60s, aging brick with slatted casement windows like an old elementary school.

INT. GYMNASIUM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

FEDERAL AGENTS, male and female, separate the ranch members into groups by sex and age.

Clipboards with questionnaires are distributed. Members look over the forms, becoming more vocal in their confusion.

Doak and Levi, mixed in amongst the crowd, quietly take in the scene. Doak flips through the mundane requests for information, but pauses at a question on the last page...

TEXT: "How well do you know ALTON MEYER? Please explain."

EXT. NATION GUARD ARMORY - BUILDING - NIGHT

A single light is on in a one-story building tucked away behind the gymnasium.

INT. NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY - BUILDING - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Calvin sits handcuffed at a metal desk in a room lit by fluorescents overhead. It looks like an empty classroom.

Agent Miller sits in one of two chairs in front of Calvin and scans the contents of a manila folder. A video camera on a tripod buzzes next to them.

Another AGENT, armed and in tactical gear, stands at the door.

AGENT MILLER
Members of your ranch acquired a sizable number of firearms over the course of the last six months. Do you have an explanation for this?

CALVIN
It’s not illegal to own weapons in this country yet.

AGENT MILLER
What is the main economic function of your ranch?

CALVIN
We have farmland, cattle, a dairy, but those aren’t for profit. We use them...

A KNOCK and the door opens. PAUL SEVIER (36) pokes his head into the room.

SEVIER
Hello. Paul Sevier, NSA.

Miller nods to the other agent to let him in.

Sevier, pronounced Se-V-Ay, is somewhat disheveled compared to the agents. He wears thick-rimmed glasses, a beard, no tie, and carries a heap of folders under his arm.

He shakes Miller’s hand as he sits.

CONTINUED:

SEVIER
Agent Miller? It's nice to meet you in person.

Miller nods, watching him. Sevier turns to Calvin.

SEVIER
Hi. As I said, my name is Paul Sevier. I work for the NSA in the field of communications. So, let's see...

Sevier opens one of his folders. He smiles when he speaks. Not in a condescending way, but more as a person genuinely excited by the topic at hand.

SEVIER
Do these mean anything to you? Polo step. Meridian Alpha. Red Saber. The number combination 38, 53, 23, 77, 1, 27.

CALVIN
Yes. They are excerpts from my sermons. That is a reading from January 18, 2010.

SEVIER
Yes, they are. Did you write these?

CALVIN
Yes, I did.

SEVIER
What if I told you that words and numbers contained in your sermons include sensitive government information that, given the dates you provide, was transmitted solely by satellite in a heavily encrypted format, the decryption and dissemination of which, other than being scientifically impossible, would surely carry punishments of treason that are so severe the government probably hasn't invented them yet?

Calvin's face draws tight.

CALVIN
The boy. It came from the boy.

CONTINUED:

AGENT MILLER
Alton Meyer?

CALVIN
Yes.

SEVIER
Okay. We knew that.

AGENT MILLER
He's your son?

CALVIN
Adopted.

AGENT MILLER
Do you know the birth father?

CALVIN
Roy Tillar.

Miller looks at Sevier, this is new information.

SEVIER
So can you tell us how an eight-year-old got this information?

Calvin eyes the men, wondering how much to share.

CALVIN
He would have fits.

SEVIER
Can you explain that?

CALVIN
He would speak in tongues. Sometimes other languages, sometimes unknown languages. We wrote them down. They became our scripture. These are the words of the Lord.

SEVIER
Or the Federal Government. What is the significance of Friday, March 6th?

Miller jumps in.

AGENT MILLER
We need to know where he is.

Calvin catches a hint of desperation. He settles back in his chair. A smug look develops as he realizes...

CONTINUED:

CALVIN
You all have no clue of what you're dealing with.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - PREDAWN

The first sign of morning light is showing in the sky.

The Chevelle turns up the street of a working-class suburb lined with '70s-era split-level houses.

An older man wearing coveralls, ELDEN (72), stands at the corner of his driveway waving them in.

The car pulls in and rolls quickly into the attached garage. Elden follows on foot clicking a remote.

He ducks inside as the garage door closes, revealing the top windows covered by cardboard.

INT. ELDEN'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The Chevelle parks next to a white utility van. Roy pulls Alton out as Lucas collects their bags.

Elden guides them through a door connected to the kitchen.

ELDEN
This way. I've prepared a room for him.

INT. ELDEN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

They walk through the small kitchen into an interior hall that leads to bedrooms at the back.

ELDEN
Alton, it's wonderful to see you again.

ALTON
Yes, sir.

Eldon seems pleased they are there, almost excited.

He leads them into a bedroom lit only by a lamp on the nightstand. A queen bed is turned down and windows are covered by heavy drapes.

ROY
Are those windows blacked out?

CONTINUED:

ELDEN
Yes. Cardboard behind with the drapes pulled. I'll let you all get settled.

ROY
Thank you.

Elden exits the room as Roy sets Alton on the bed.

ROY
Kick your shoes off.

Roy places his comics on the nightstand and pulls the covers back. Alton climbs in.

LUCAS
Get some sleep, Alton.

ALTON
Night, Lucas.

Lucas exits, closing the door behind him. Roy takes the orange headphones from around Alton's neck.

ROY
Goggles.

Alton slips the goggles off, rubbing at the indentations left by them. Roy takes and places them on the comics. Alton looks up at him from the pillow.

ROY
Try and sleep. We'll have breakfast when you get up.

ALTON
Okay.

Alton closes his eyes as Roy slips the headphones over his ears. Roy switches off the lamp and walks out.

INT. ELDEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Lucas and Elden stand in the living room at the front of the house. They stare at a television in the corner.

CNN has picked up the Amber Alert concerning Alton. Roy joins them as his photo flashes on screen.

LUCAS
That's CNN.

CONTINUED:

ROY
What about the State Trooper?

LUCAS
Nothing.

ELDEN
I'm surprised the ranch released this.

ROY
I don't think they did.

LUCAS
I'll take first watch. You need to sleep.

ELDEN
Do you need anything?

LUCAS
A drink, and a shirt.

ELDEN
Certainly.

Elden exits. Roy turns toward the kitchen but Lucas stops him with a yank to the shoulder.

LUCAS
I'm in this for Alton. All the way. But things with that Trooper didn't need to go down like that. Don't interfere with me again.

He releases Roy's shoulder and turns back to the television. Roy hesitates before continuing into the kitchen.

IN THE KITCHEN

Roy takes a seat at the dinette, exhausted. Elden emerges from the back with a bottle of bourbon and a map rolled up under his arm.

ELDEN
I want you to see something.

Elden pours two glasses of liquor and continues as he delivers one to Lucas in the next room.

CONTINUED:

ELDEN
Taking the coordinates you gave me, I've started mapping out possibilities. The place is clear, but I still don't have an answer as to why that place.

Elden re-enters, sets the other glass of liquor in front of Roy and unfurls the map flat on the table. It's of the United States with arching lines drawn across it.

ELDEN
Have you studied anything about the concept of ley lines?

ROY
No.

ELDEN
Their validity is arguable, but it's the only...

ROY
Elden. I'm tired.

ELDEN
Of course. I'm sorry. I'll let you rest.

Elden clears the map off the table and heads for the hallway.

ROY
Do you miss it?

Elden pauses.

ROY
Living on the ranch.

ELDEN
Yes. Very much.

Elden retires to the back of the house. Roy thinks on this, shifting the bourbon in his glass.

INT. ELDEN'S HOUSE - DAY

Lucas has pulled a wing chair over to the front window. He pulls back the heavy drapes to see outside, squinting at the bright sunlight. The TV plays muted behind him.

IN THE KITCHEN

Roy lies asleep on his arms across the dinette table.

A VIBRATION.

Without moving, Roy opens his eyes. He stares at the untouched glass of bourbon in front of him.

The vibration continues, jostling the liquid.

Roy's head pops up.

ROY
Elden?

Things intensify. Dishes begin to rattle in the sink.

ROY
Lucas!

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Lucas' head snaps around, and he's on his feet.

IN THE HALL

Roy rushes toward Alton's bedroom. Lucas joins from the other end of the house as Roy rattles a locked door.

The vibration has grown into a full-on tremor, frames falling, windows cracking.

ROY
Alton!

Roy busts through shoulder-first to find...

IN THE BEDROOM

Elden sits on the edge of the bed leaning over Alton, the orange headphones lying nearby.

A BLINDING BEAM OF LIGHT emits from Alton's eyes.

It flows directly into Elden's eyes.

The boy's back is arched, his face pained as the whole house shifts in this apparent quake.

The ceiling separates from the walls as the corner of the room splits open revealing blue sky overhead.

CONTINUED:

SUNLIGHT STREAMS IN, blanketing the bed.

Roy rushes in, grabbing a fallen lamp off the floor.

In a single sweeping move across the room, Roy smashes the base into Eldon's face. Forcing a separation.

Alton screams, struggling to squeeze his eyes shut. The LIGHT spills through his closed lids as luminescent tears stream down his face.

Roy quickly scoops Alton up and moves him out of the sunlight. They fall together on the other side of the bed. Roy cradling him against his chest.

Lucas, wide-eyed by the whole event, stands over Elden, who squirms on the floor holding his bloodied head.

ROY
Shhhhhh. Shhhhhh.

Roy gently rocks Alton as the vibrations subside.

ROY
Calm. Be calm. Shhhhhh. We're okay. Shhhhhh.

Things quiet down. Lucas watches Roy comfort his son.

INT. NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY - ROOM - SERIES OF INTERVIEWS - DAY

The wheels of a pocket recorder turn slowly as a woman speaks with a soft, East Texas accent.

HANNAH
Things would break.

SEVIER
What kinds of things?

HANNAH
Windows, light bulbs, cars would shut down, that kind of thing.

Sevier takes notes as HANNAH, a female ranch member in her 50s, speaks. They are in a large open room in the armory. It's flooded with daylight from the casement windows.

CONTINUED:

HANNAH
It got worse the older he got so they just started lettin' him sleep in the daytime and he'd be awake at night. That's why our services are all at night now.

SEVIER
And what is your job on the ranch?

HANNAH
Childcare. I help look after all of Brother Calvin's children. Alton came to be with him, it's been over two years now.

SEVIER
And the birth mother?

HANNAH
She abandoned him.

A DIFFERENT INTERVIEW

FREDRICK
Yes, I've done it.

SEVIER
Communing?

FREDRICK
That's what we call it.

SEVIER
To be clear, a visible spectrum of light came from his eyes.

FREDRICK
Yes.

FREDRICK (42), also a ranch member, is a roughneck farmhand.

SEVIER
And others have mentioned seeing things. Did he show you things during this process?

FREDRICK
Yes.

SEVIER
What kinds of things?

CONTINUED:

FREDRICK
I wouldn't know where to start.

Sevier smiles, frustrated.

SEVIER
And Friday, March 6th? Why is this date important?

FREDRICK
It's the day of our judgment.

SEVIER
What makes you say that?

FREDRICK
I believe it.

ANOTHER INTERVIEW

CAROLINE
It wasn't like images. Not what I remember. It was more like a feeling.

CAROLINE (32) has a pleasant face framed under the bun in her hair.

SEVIER
What kind of feeling?

Caroline thinks about this, choosing her words.

CAROLINE
Comfort.

SEVIER
And what do you think will happen on Friday, March 6th?

CAROLINE
I really don't know.

INT. NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY - GYMNASIUM - DAY

Doak and Levi sit amongst 20 MEMBERS, men, women, and children, in the bleachers of the Armory's gymnasium.

Across the room, other MEMBERS wait in a single file line.

FBI AGENT #1
Barbara Meyer?

CONTINUED:

A WOMAN steps out of the line and the FBI AGENT, holding a clipboard, ushers her through a set of double doors nearby.

Doak watches this from the bleachers. ANOTHER AGENT with a clipboard stands in front of them.

FBI AGENT #2
I need everybody to stand up and exit through the front doors.

The bleachers squeak as the members get to their feet.

EXT. NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY - GYMNASIUM - AFTERNOON

A single bus idles in front of the gymnasium as Doak and Levi, with the 20 other members, climb aboard.

INT./EXT. GOVERNMENT BUS/FIELDS - LATE AFTERNOON

Doak and Levi jostle on the ride back to the ranch. The bus is only half-full.

EXT. THIRD HEAVEN RANCH - MAIN GATE - LATE AFTERNOON

At the front gate of the ranch, the members off-load from the bus. Some are greeted warmly by family, others mill about.

Doak and Levi greet no one. They walk to the rows of houses.

INT. THIRD HEAVEN RANCH - DOAK'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Doak walks in the front door of the modestly furnished bunkhouse. His wife, MERRIANNE (42), has been seated at the kitchen table waiting. She stands when she sees him.

MERRIANNE
Thank God.

They come together, hugging. He kisses her on the forehead before continuing into the back of the house. She follows with a concerned look.

MERRIANNE
The buses aren't coming back full. They're keeping people.

CONTINUED:

DOAK
They've kept a lot of 'em.

MERRIANNE
Why? For how long?

DOAK
We don't know.

IN THEIR BEDROOM

Doak hasn't broken stride. He moves to the bedroom closet and pulls back the accordion doors.

On his knees, he reaches deep into the closet and removes a panel from the back wall. He pulls out a long, heavy duffel bag. It rests with a THUNK next to him.

MERRIANNE
What about Brother Calvin?

DOAK
I'm not sure.

He grabs another empty duffel and tosses it on the bed. He begins packing items from a nearby dresser.

MERRIANNE
Where are you going?

Doak zips the bag, lifts the other off the floor and walks out of the room. Merrianne follows.

NEAR THE FRONT DOOR

Doak stops and turns to his wife.

DOAK
I'm not sure when I'll be back.

She stares at him, worried but reserved.

DOAK
I love you very much.

He kisses her and walks out the door.

EXT. THIRD HEAVEN RANCH - DOAK'S HOUSE - DUSK

The sun is setting.

CONTINUED:

Levi sits behind the wheel of a crew cab pickup in front of Doak's house.

Doak exits and walks to the passenger door. He places his bags in the backseat and climbs up front.

The truck pulls away.

INT. ELDEN'S HOUSE - IN THE KITCHEN - DUSK

Alton, back in the goggles with the headphones around his neck, stares at an untouched peanut butter sandwich. He looks gaunt, paler than usual. Lucas watches him.

Roy enters and sets his duffel bag by the door.

ROY
Lucas, can you get Alton in the van?

LUCAS
Yeah.

Roy waits for them to leave then walks to the living room.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Elden sits in a wing chair, his wrists bound with duct tape.

ROY
We're taking your van.

Elden doesn't respond, keeping his eyes on the floor.

After a moment, Roy takes the pistol from the back of his pants and lets it hang by his side.

Elden doesn't move.

ELDEN
Please. Don't.

ROY
You know where we're going.

ELDEN
I would never. Please. I just had to see again.

ROY
You knew better.

CONTINUED:

Roy stares at him, breathes deep.

EXT. INTERSTATE - AERIAL SHOT (MOVING) - DUSK

The interstate, as seen from the sky.

Rows of high mast lamps illuminate the road as the daylight dies on the eastern horizon.

INT./EXT. VAN/INTERSTATE (MOVING) - NIGHT

A dull, quiet static comes from the police scanner, which has been hooked up on the dash of Elden's van. Roy drives with Lucas in the passenger seat.

Alton is on a bench seat in the back amongst an assortment of plumbing tools and parts. His nose is back in the comics.

ROY
We need to stop for gas, and we could use some supplies.

LUCAS
I'll go in. The less people that see you the better.

ROY
I need to use a pay phone.

ALTON
What's Adamantium?

LUCAS
Strongest metal in the universe.

ROY
It's made up.
(to Lucas)
You shouldn't have given him those. He's never seen a comic book in his life.

LUCAS
That's why he needed 'em. Reading's reading.

Lucas looks back at Alton, fully engrossed in the comic.

LUCAS
He looks weaker.

CONTINUED:

ROY
He is.

Alton looks up from his comic, as if in response to their conversation, but his head cocks to the side, suggesting he's listening for something else.

LUCAS
But he recovers?

ROY
He's fine.

Suddenly --

ALTON
... de quinto grado. En el colegio todos me ponían apodos, confesó Breanna, que reside en Clovis, California. Me llamaban gordita y estúpida, recuerda con amargura...

Lucas turns, surprised. Roy does not.

LUCAS
He speaks Spanish?

ROY
It's something he does. Turn on the radio.

Alton is still rattling off Spanish as Lucas powers on the radio. Static.

ROY
Scroll through the stations.

Lucas does. Each push of the button brings random music or programs until --

ALTON/RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
(in unison)
... la niña comenzó a subir de peso cuando era bebé. Al momento de ingresar a preescolar ya había alcanzado las 100 libras, y no podía jugar con sus compañeros debido al exceso de...

Alton stops speaking, letting the announcer's voice take over. Lucas stares back at him, but Alton just returns to his comic.

CONTINUED:

A Tejano song begins to play as Lucas faces front, still processing this.

EXT. GIANT TRUCK STOP - NIGHT

The van pulls into a massive truck stop packed with semis. The convenience store and surrounding lots are all lit up by tall bright lamps. An oasis in flat dark terrain.

IN THE VAN

Roy has parked at a gas stall. Lucas climbs out and heads to the store as Roy digs coins from the cup holders.

ROY
We'll be right back. Stay in the van.

IN THE PARKING LOT

Roy keeps his head down as he makes his way to a bank of pay phones on the side of the store. Traffic is fairly heavy. Cars and people continually pass by.

IN THE CONVENIENCE STORE

Lucas peruses the junk food aisle. Picking items.

IN THE VAN

Alton reads the comic.

His head pops up, again as if hearing something. This time though, his eyes begin tracking a point on the van ceiling.

He leans back, following the invisible point. He stands, engrossed, and walks toward the back doors.

Still tracking the point, he opens the doors and climbs out.

BY THE PAY PHONES

Roy dials a number and turns his back to the parking lot, shielding his face.

CONTINUED:

ROY
(into the phone)
Hey. Yeah, we're okay. We should be there in a couple hours.

IN THE PARKING LOT

Alton wanders from the back of the van with his head cocked back, staring into the sky. He stops near the edge of the parking lot. His gaze fixed on a point overhead.

In the sky, A BRIEF SPARK STREAKS, like a shooting star.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Are you okay?

Alton turns, surprised by the voice.

AT THE PAY PHONES

ROY
(into the phone)
I know. I'm...
(searches for the words)
I want to see you.

Roy turns to check the parking lot.

He sees Alton standing out in the open. A beat-up car has pulled alongside him and a WOMAN (36) is climbing out of the passenger side. She approaches Alton.

ROY
We'll be there soon.

Roy slams the receiver down and runs toward Alton.

IN THE CONVENIENCE STORE

Lucas stands at the register, his items already bagged, waiting for the CASHIER to make change.

He looks outside to see Roy darting by.

LUCAS
(to the Cashier)
Keep it.

Lucas grabs the grocery bags and rushes outside.

IN THE PARKING LOT

The Woman kneels down in front of Alton.

WOMAN
Why are you wearin' those goggles?

She reaches out to pull them from his eyes.

ROY (O.S.)
Stop!

Roy flies between them, out of breath.

ROY
He's with me. He's my son.

The Woman gets to her feet, taken aback.

WOMAN
You need to watch your kid.

ROY
Yeah. I got it. Thank you.

Roy pulls Alton close as they watch the Woman get in her car and drive off.

Lucas arrives behind them.

LUCAS
Everything okay?

ROY
Yeah.

Roy kneels down and grabs Alton by the shoulders. As stern as we've seen him toward the boy.

ROY
You CANNOT leave the van. You hear me?

ALTON
I'm sorry.

Roy, calming down, takes his hands away.

ROY
It's okay. I shouldn't have left you.

ALTON
No. I'm sorry.

CONTINUED:

As the words leave his mouth --

SEVERAL FLAMING OBJECTS STREAK ACROSS THE SKY BEHIND THEM.

Lucas looks up to see SEVERAL MORE FLAMING OBJECTS falling directly overhead.

LUCAS
Roy.

Roy and Alton look up in time to see some of the OBJECTS disappear, burning out in the sky, but a handful of others...

SMASH!

A FLAMING HUNK CRASHES INTO THE ENGINE BLOCK OF A PICKUP PARKED NEARBY.

LUCAS
Jesus!

Roy grabs Alton and they all sprint toward the van as more pieces of FLAMING DEBRIS rain down around them.

As they reach the van --

BOOM!

A final piece of debris crashes into a cage of PROPANE TANKS lined up next to the store.

A BALL OF BLUE FLAME RISES INTO THE SKY.

The concussive blast pushes Roy through the open van doors with Alton in his arms. They crash onto the floorboard.

ROY
Go!

Lucas cranks the ignition and slams down the gas pedal.

The nozzle is ripped from the van's tank as they speed away. A dark cloud of smoke billows off the building left behind.

INT./EXT. VAN/INTERSTATE (MOVING) - NIGHT

The van flies down the interstate.

Roy and Alton climb off the floorboard onto the backseat as Lucas eyes the rearview.

CONTINUED:

Roy turns, looking through the back windows as the plume of smoke receding in the distance.

ALTON
Dad?

Roy looks down to see that Alton has brought a hand to his ear. He holds out his palm showing blood there.

Blood leaks from both of Alton's ears. He looks up to Roy as blood begins to run from his nose.

ALTON
Dad?

Roy rips off his shirt and holds it to Alton's face.

ROY
Lean your head back.

LUCAS
Is he okay?

Roy pulls Alton against his chest, staining his undershirt.

ROY
Can you breathe?

Alton nods.

LUCAS
Do we need to find a hospital?

ROY
No. Keep driving.
(to Alton)
You're okay. Breathe through your mouth.

LUCAS
Is this something he does?

Roy looks up to Lucas, he doesn't have an answer.

EXT. SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

SARAH (34) sits under a front porch light on the steps of a small, white house. Her eyes cast down in thought. Her hair braided long down her back.

She perks up at the sound of an approaching vehicle. Headlights lead the white utility van into the neighborhood.

CONTINUED:

Sarah stands and walks onto the lawn, catching their attention. The van pulls in the gravel drive and parks.

Sarah waits on the lawn, breathless, as the doors open on the opposite side of the van.

Alton emerges from around the front end.

SARAH
Alton?

Alton runs to her. She kneels to embrace him. They squeeze each other tightly. Sarah is on the verge of tears. She whispers to him.

SARAH
Thank God. Thank you, God.

After a moment, she pulls back to see him.

SARAH
Let me look at you.

She passes her hands over his face, which has been cleaned up. She removes the goggles to find his brown eyes and a smile.

SARAH
Look at you. So big. So grown up.

She embraces him again. She looks up to see Lucas climbing out of the driver's side.

SARAH
Hello.

LUCAS
Hi.

She stands, keeping Alton pressed into her side.

SARAH
I'm Sarah.

LUCAS
Lucas.

She sees Roy appear from the other side of the van. He holds his crumpled shirt against his white undershirt, trying to cover the blood stains, but she notices.

SARAH
Are you okay?

CONTINUED:

ROY
Yeah.

Roy walks over to her. He's close but not touching. They look at each other for a long moment. Lucas takes note.

ROY
How are you?

SARAH
I missed him.

She smiles, still holding back tears, then regroups.

SARAH
Come on. You all must be exhausted. Come inside. I got you a present, Alton.

She takes Roy's hand and guides them to the house. Lucas follows.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Alton sits on the floor of the den in a sparsely-furnished house playing with a new set of LEGO blocks. The floor plan is open, with the den area flowing into dining and kitchen.

Roy and Sarah sit near Alton watching him play. Roy is wearing a clean shirt buttoned back up to the collar.

Lucas is at the dinner table watching them all. He cleans the pieces of his dismantled pistol.

SARAH
I can't take my eyes off him.

Lucas watches Roy place his hand on Sarah's knee. She lays her own on top of his. From this view, they look like a happy family. Lucas goes back to cleaning the pistol.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bedroom is dark. Sheets are hung over cardboard covered windows for a bit of decor, but the room is near empty with unpacked boxes stacked in a corner.

Sarah has Alton already tucked in, goggles off with head-phones around his neck. She sits on the edge of the bed, not wanting to leave.

CONTINUED:

SARAH
You comfortable?

ALTON
Yes.

She brushes her hand over his forehead. There are dark circles under his eyes and his color is still off.

SARAH
Are you feeling okay?

ALTON
I'm fine.

She smiles at him.

SARAH
I'm so happy you're here.

ALTON
Are you going with us?

SARAH
Yes.

Alton smiles back at her.

SARAH
Get some sleep.

She kisses his forehead and places the headphones over his ears. She quietly leaves the room.

IN THE HALL

Sarah eases the door shut and turns to find Lucas and Roy standing in the hall. They speak in hushed voices.

ROY
He okay?

SARAH
Yes. He looks weak though.

LUCAS
He's sick.

ROY
He's been getting weaker, but he's okay.

IN THE BEDROOM

Alton lies awake, the headphones off, listening to the muffled voices.

IN THE HALL

SARAH
Should we do something?

ROY
Just stick to the plan and get him there by Friday.

LUCAS
You think that's wise?

ROY
Let me be clear. This date, and this place, it's all we have. It's everything. We take him to a hospital and it's over.

LUCAS
If it's between that or him dying?

ROY
He'll make it.

Roy cuts off the conversation by walking into another room at the end of the hall. Sarah is left with Lucas.

SARAH
I think he's right.

Lucas gives a piqued nod.

LUCAS
I don't know if there's a way out of alla this for y'all, which is a shame, because you'd make a nice family otherwise.

Lucas exits to the den. Sarah is left alone with this.

INT./EXT. LEVI'S TRUCK/NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

Early morning sprinklers soak manicured lawns.

Levi and Doak sit parked in the pickup across the street from a nice house. Levi stares at the house, but Doak's mind is somewhere else.

CONTINUED:

After a moment:

DOAK
I'm an electrician. Certified in two states.

Levi looks at him, puzzled by the introspection.

DOAK
What do I know about any of this?

LEVI
He wouldn't have picked you if you couldn't do it.

The expected answer. Doak nods, reluctant, and reaches down into the duffle bag at his feet.

He removes a pistol and tucks it into the back of his pants. He then takes out a roll of duct tape and places in his front jacket pocket.

DOAK
Sometimes we're asked to do things that are beyond us.

Doak climbs out of the truck and approaches the house across the street. Levi follows.

EXT. JANE ADAMS' HOUSE - DAY

Doak makes it up the front steps and rings the bell. He can hear movement inside.

Levi joins him on the steps as the door opens and JANE, a well-kept woman in her late 60s, stands guarded behind the screen door.

JANE
Yes?

DOAK
Are you Sarah Tillar's mother?

JANE
Her last name is Adams.

DOAK
Of course. Sarah Adams.

JANE
Are you from the ranch?

CONTINUED:

DOAK
Yes we are.

JANE
She says she's not associated with you any longer.

DOAK
We need to find her.

JANE
Why?

LEVI
We think she may be in danger. May we come in?

Jane eyes them, unsure.

INT./EXT. HELICOPTER/GIANT TRUCK STOP - DAY

Sevier sits in the back of a helicopter as it makes its descent. He wears headphones and gives a thumbs-up to an FBI AGENT riding across from him, which is not reciprocated.

The helicopter touches down in the now vacant parking lot surrounding the truck stop. The agent opens the door and helps Sevier outside.

EXT. GIANT TRUCK STOP - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Agent Miller, followed by THREE OTHER PLAIN CLOTHES AGENTS, greet Sevier bent and shouting under the rotors.

AGENT MILLER
How could someone cause a satellite to fall out of orbit?!

SEVIER
I have no idea! Ask an engineer!

The rotors spin down to a stop and the men straighten as they approach the back side of the truck stop.

AGENT MILLER
Alton Meyer brought down one of your agency's satellites last night.

They round the building and see the wreckage.

CONTINUED:

A charred hole blown in the front side of the building. The demolished pickup. DOZENS OF AGENTS swarm the area.

SEVIER
Fascinating.

Helicopters circle overhead. National Guard soldiers block the highway, effectively sealing off the truck stop. AGENTS IN HAZMAT SUITS scour the surrounding fields.

Miller hands over a stack of satellite imagery photos. The same image in various formats. Sevier flips through.

AGENT MILLER
OPS-9712. The satellite was tasked with collecting information on radiation density using...

SEVIER
Wavelengths in the EM spectrum, Microwave, Infrared, Gamma.

AGENT MILLER
This was the last image sent back from the satellite. We believe the boy was standing at the center of that heat bloom.

SEVIER
It’s not exactly a heat bloom, but that’s fine.

AGENT MILLER
We’ve had drones searching for their car since the state trooper was shot. They’ve been canvassing eastbound interstates and highways.

SEVIER
May not be legal.

AGENT MILLER
Could a drone be programmed to search for this specific heat signature?

Sevier looks up and smiles. He knows this one.

SEVIER
Yes.

CONTINUED:

AGENT MILLER
We have a field office in Mobile we're going to base your team out of.

SEVIER
What about the interviews?

AGENT MILLER
You're done with those. Like it or not, you're now the resident expert on Alton Meyer.

Miller and the agents walk off leaving Sevier to take in his new position.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Lucas finishes buttoning a shirt over his own Kevlar vest. He zips closed a duffle bag, grabs a rolled-up sleeping bag and walks into the den.

IN THE DEN

Roy and Sarah watch a news program on television. Aerial footage of the truck stop is shown. Lucas pauses to watch.

NEWS REPORT (V.O.)
The weather satellite, owned by a Canadian company, is said to have suffered mechanical failure which caused it to careen out of orbit.

SARAH
Alton did this?

Roy nods.

SARAH
My God.

LUCAS
I'll be outside.

Lucas exits out the front door.

CONTINUED:

NEWS REPORT (V.O.)
Regional National Guard troops have been brought in to block off the area until officials can be certain there is no exposure to potentially hazardous materials, though it's said that likelihood is miniscule.

ROY
Can you ask Lucas to move the van into the garage?

SARAH
Okay.

Sarah pulls her eyes off the images and exits out the front.

EXT. SARAH'S HOUSE - DAY

Sarah finds Lucas crammed under the dash of her car, a late '90s Isuzu Rodeo. He's fiddling with the wiring, hooking up the police scanner.

SARAH
Roy asked if you'd pull the van back into the garage when you're done?

LUCAS
Okay.

Sarah hesitates at the open passenger door.

SARAH
You're not from the ranch?

Lucas snorts.

LUCAS
No.

SARAH
Then how do you know Roy?

LUCAS
We grew up together. We were real close for a long time, but after his parents moved them all out to that ranch we fell off. Three nights ago there was a knock at the door and Roy was standing there with Alton.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

LUCAS (CONT'D)
He said he was in trouble, asked if I'd help. Alton sat me down, took off his goggles, and...

Lucas makes a gesture with his hand at his eyes. Pauses from his work, remembering the moment.

LUCAS
You know when he does that shit with his eyes it's, ah... it's powerful.

Sarah nods. Lucas goes back to the wiring.

LUCAS
I can't say I believe in God, but if there is one, He made that boy.

SARAH
Yes. He made us all Lucas.

LUCAS
You bet.

Lucas sits up and climbs out of the car. She looks at his work.

SARAH
What do you do in San Angelo?

LUCAS
I'm a State Trooper.

Lucas wraps up his tools and walks toward the van.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW - DUSK

A HIGH ALTITUDE VIEW.

Clouds. The sun is disappearing behind the slight curvature of horizon.

Gradual movement reveals a darkening landscape below speckled with lights.

INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - DUSK

Alton sits frozen on the floor of the den holding one of the LEGO pieces. Behind the goggles, his eyes stare off blankly into space.

SARAH (O.S.)
Alton?

CONTINUED:

He snaps his head around to find Sarah standing by the front door with their bags.

ALTON
Yes?

SARAH
It’s time to go.

He drops the LEGO and goes to her. She guides him outside.

EXT. SARAH’S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS ACTION

There’s just enough light in the sky to make out the neighborhood.

Sarah and Alton head for the idling Isuzu parked in the drive where Roy and Lucas are waiting. The car has been packed with bags and supplies.

Lucas opens the back door for them, keeping his eyes on the street. Roy climbs in up front. Lucas behind the wheel.

The car backs out of the drive and disappears down the street.

HOLDING ON the street.

After a moment...

Doak and Levi’s truck turns onto the street at the opposite end of the neighborhood.

Their truck prowls slowly, searching the house numbers. Finding Sarah’s, they park across the street.

Doak steps out of the truck, surveying the vacant neighborhood. He studies the house.

INT. SARAH’S HOUSE - DUSK

A LEGO figurine. It’s head has been replaced with a transparent yellow piece.

Doak holds the figure up, turning it in his hand.

LEVI
Here's a receipt for her car insurance. Isuzu Rodeo. ‘99.

CONTINUED:

Levi stands in the kitchen thumbing through a stack of bills in a junk drawer.

Doak drops the LEGO amongst a pile of similarly-modified figurines. He walks to a window on the driveway side of the house and peeks through the blinds.

He spots the rear of the utility van parked in the garage.

DOAK
There's a van in the garage. See if it's got a registration in it.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/INTERSTATE (MOVING) - NIGHT

Alton sits in the back staring out the window. His comics sit untouched next to him. He watches the shape of a dark forest undulating along the interstate.

Sarah studies his silhouette. It seems slight, frail in the intermittent light. Just highway lamps and headlights.

SARAH
Alton?

ALTON
Yes?

SARAH
What happened at the gas station, did you mean to do that?

ALTON
Yes.

SARAH
Why?

ALTON
They were watching me.

Roy turns to look at him. Lucas catches him in the rearview.

LUCAS
Who was watching you, Alton?

ALTON
The same people that talk about me.

CONTINUED:

SARAH
Who talks about you?

ALTON
The police.

LUCAS
How do you know it's the police?

ALTON
They talk like the police on your radio.

Alton points to the scanner mounted on the dash.

ROY
What do they say?

ALTON
They're looking for me.

They ride in silence. Alton turns his attention back outside.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/INTERSTATE (MOVING) - NIGHT

Stars in a clear sky. The dark treeline. High mast lamps passing.

IN THE CAR

Sarah has fallen asleep. Her head against the window. Lucas and Roy ride up front, their eyes on the road.

Coughing.

Roy turns to the backseat.

ROY
Alton?

Sarah opens her eyes to find Alton in a coughing fit that's getting worse. He doubles over in his seat.

ROY
Alton?!

She snaps off her seat belt and slides over to him.

SARAH
Breathe. Can you breathe?

CONTINUED:

He's turning red, shaking his head "NO." The coughing has stopped but now he's struggling to take in air.

SARAH
Roy?!

ROY
Pull over!

Lucas grinds the car over the shoulder and skids to a stop on a grassy incline. Alton strains, his mouth agape.

Suddenly...

Air. Alton takes in a deep breath. Then another.

Alton's breathing returns.

ROY
Are you okay?

Alton looks at him. Scared, but controlled. He nods.

The adults being to relax, but Alton pauses. He lifts his hands up to study them. First the palms, then the knuckles.

SARAH
What is it?

Alton looks at her. Despite the goggles.

A brilliant FLASH OF LIGHT pops from his eyes.

Sarah audibly flinches. Her hands fly to her face.

ALTON
Mom?

SARAH
I'm okay.

ALTON
Mom?

Another FLASH. Alton yanks off the goggles to rub his eyes. They hang around his neck.

Roy and Lucas have to shield their faces as Alton's eyes begin to strobe intermittently with light.

Like a flash bulb gone haywire. It intensifies.

Alton begins to cry amidst it.

CONTINUED:

ALTON
Mom? What's happening?

OUTSIDE THE CAR

Traffic passes as the car windows flood with pulsating light.

It builds to a single stable source of light. Filling the car, creating strict beams through all the windows.

Then it stops as quickly as it started.

The car sits idling, headlights and taillights on.

INSIDE

Sarah, Roy, and Lucas slowly pull their hands away from their eyes. All trying to regain focus.

A back door opens. Alton is climbing out.

ROY
Alton?

OUTSIDE

Interstate traffic blows by Alton as he walks, in a daze, around the back of the car.

Roy and Sarah get out in time to see Alton fall in the grass onto his hands and knees.

SARAH
Alton!

Sarah and Roy run to him as he begins dry heaving. His back arching with each convulsion. She tries to comfort but doesn't know where to put her hands.

SARAH
Water. Get him water.

Roy rushes to the car and reaches inside the back door. Lucas has made it over. His eyes grow wide.

LUCAS
Look.

Roy turns in time to see...

All around Alton's body, THE VEGETATION IS TURNING BROWN.

CONTINUED:

This radiates out from him. Sarah looks down to see it spreading under her knees.

SARAH
Oh God.

She places her hands on Alton's back.

Lucas shifts his weight to his heels, but before the growing circle can reach them the process has stopped.

Alton collapses into the grass. Sarah immediately cradles his limp body. Whispering to him.

SARAH
You're okay. You're okay. You're okay.

Alton doesn't respond.

Roy is frozen. Staring at Sarah holding the small, lifeless figure. The world around him stands still.

Then --

SARAH
He's breathing!

It's as if Roy has taken his own first breath. Emotion floods his face.

He turns back to the car, flinging items inside, searching.

LUCAS
Roy.

ROY
He needs water.

LUCAS
We have to take him to a hospital.

Roy heads for Alton, but Lucas grabs his arm.

ROY
No!

LUCAS
He's dying!

ROY
No! He's meant for something else!

CONTINUED:

LUCAS
He's sick! He needs help!

Lucas makes a move for Alton, but Roy yanks him back.

Lucas PUNCHES Roy. Unfazed, Roy grabs Lucas and slings him into the side of the car.

LUCAS
Goddammit!

Roy stands over Lucas as he writhes on the ground.

SARAH
Alton?

Roy turns to find Alton standing, his eyes on the sky. Sarah looks up at him, still on her knees.

Lucas, holding an aching side, props himself up to see.

ALTON
We have to go. They're coming.

SARAH
Who's coming?

Alton points up into the sky.

ALTON
There.

FROM THE SKY

A DISTANT AERIAL VIEW of the group. CIRCLING OVERHEAD.

ON THE GROUND

Alton looks to Sarah.

ALTON
You take the car, with Lucas.
(to Roy)
We need to go that way.

Alton motions to the treeline. Roy's mind races.

ALTON
Now.

Roy reaches in the car and yanks out a duffel bag. He grabs Alton and sprints down the incline toward the woods.

CONTINUED:

Lucas gets to his feet and watches as Roy disappears with Alton into the dense treeline.

LUCAS
What the...

He turns at the sound of the car starting. Sarah is behind the wheel and ready to leave him. Lucas runs to the passenger side and climbs in.

The car spits dirt and gravel as it veers back into honking traffic on the interstate.

EXT. FOREST - AERIAL SHOT - NIGHT

APPROACHING the treeline from the interstate. RISING TO SKIM OVER the treetops of a dark, expansive forest.

ON THE GROUND

Roy rushes through the woods clutching Alton against his chest. Dodging trees, fighting through brambles.

On an incline, he stumbles. Crashing onto the forest floor.

Roy lies twisted on the ground, having shielded Alton. Alton stands, checking his father.

ALTON
Are you okay?

ROY
Yes.

ALTON
I can run.

Roy gets to his feet, catching wind and gathering up the duffel bag.

ALTON
This way.

Alton takes off.

Roy keeps up, but the boy is faster than expected. They work their way deeper into the woods.

ALTON
Stop here. Down. Like this.

CONTINUED:

Alton moves close to Roy and crouches at his feet. He reaches up and pulls Roy over top of him.

ROY
What's this?

ALTON
Wait.

Roy does. Alton watches the dark sky.

ALTON
Now.

Alton darts up, leading a new charge through the forest.

Churning out exhausted breaths, stampeding through the wilderness, Alton points.

ALTON
There!

He flies toward a massive fallen tree, sliding into a skid that takes him under a hollowed-out section of timber. Roy, less graceful, follows suit.

They huddle close under that vine-covered shelter trying to regulate their breathing.

THE SOUND OF HELICOPTERS APPROACHING. GETTING CLOSER.

Then --

The forest FILLS WITH LIGHT as multiple helicopters pass over shining spots down into the trees.

The lights sweep the area and move on. The thumping rotors trailing off.

ALTON
They won't circle back.

ROY
How do you know?

ALTON
I can hear them talking. This way.

Alton climbs out from under the tree, turns to help Roy and is off again. Running.

Roy lags behind, but keeps Alton in sight. He sees the boy stop suddenly.

CONTINUED:

Roy catches up as Alton approaches a rock formation cropping out of the forest floor. Alton runs his fingers over the moss-covered surface.

Alton kneels, finding an opening in the rock near his feet. He pulls back wet vines to reveal a large sinkhole at the base of the rock.

Alton disappears inside.

ROY
Alton?

Roy lies on the ground, secures the duffel on his shoulder and follows him in.

INT. CAVERN - NIGHT

PITCH BLACK.

The SOUND of Roy inching along. Dragging the duffel. Then sliding on loose rock which leads to...

A THUMP.

ROY
Alton?

ALTON
I've got it.

CLICK. Alton snaps on the Maglite he uses for his comics.

It reveals a deep cavern. It's true size left unknown by the weak flashlight.

Roy gets to his feet, in awe of the new surroundings.

ROY
How did you know this was here?

ALTON
I didn't.

Roy steps forward. He studies the walls and ceiling. Pools of deep water make entering any further impossible.

ROY
It's perfect.

Roy kneels and unzips the duffel bag.

CONTINUED:

ROY
The sun will be up in a few hours.
We can wait out the daylight here.

Behind him, Alton collapses. The flashlight drops.

ROY
Alton?

Roy rushes to him with the bag. He takes out a rolled-up shirt and places it under Alton's head.

ALTON
I'm okay.

Roy finds a bottle of water in the bag. He has Alton drink. With the goggles still around his neck, his dark, sunken eyes are apparent. He looks ill. Roy touches his forehead.

ROY
I'm sorry. This is my fault.

ALTON
No. I need something.

ROY
What?

ALTON
I need to be awake during the day.
In the sun.

ROY
You can't.

Roy removes a blanket from the bag, trying to dismiss this.

ALTON
I have to.

ROY
It could kill you.

ALTON
I have to.

Roy stares at his son, a newfound maturity in him.

He covers him with the blanket and settles in next to him. They sit huddled under the surreal cavern walls.

EXT. OUTLET MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Isuzu prowls down a parking aisle packed with vehicles in a massive outlet mall lot.

IN THE CAR

Lucas sits in the passenger seat. His eyes searching.

LUCAS
There.

Sarah stops the car. Lucas gets out.

IN THE PARKING LOT

Lucas holds a screwdriver in one hand and the Isuzu's license plate in the other. He approaches a similar model Isuzu parked nearby. A different color, but close.

Lucas kneels behind the car and begins switching the plates.

IN THE CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Sarah watches in the rearview as Lucas rises up from behind their Isuzu. He walks to the passenger side and climbs in.

LUCAS
Okay. So what now?

SARAH
We'll go to the motel. That's where they know to meet us.

Lucas eyes her, reluctant. The car pulls away.

INT. ELDEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Inside Elden's kitchen.

It's dark. The sound of the garage door closes outside.

Elden enters from the garage and flips on the lights. He cradles a sack of groceries. His head is bandaged.

He sets the groceries on the kitchen counter.

LEVI (O.S.)
Old habits die hard.

CONTINUED:

He flinches.

Doak and Levi are sitting in his living room staring at him.

LEVI
Still staying up nights?

Elden stands frozen.

DOAK
What happened to your head, Elden?

INT. FBI REGIONAL OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

It's late in the office, but there is still activity happening outside the darkened conference room.

Sevier sits in the dimly-lit room that's been converted into a makeshift headquarters for his team. He's alone, save for a STAFFER who has fallen asleep at his computer.

Stacks of files crowd multiple monitors. The walls are covered with note cards and Post-its.

Sevier stares at a series of dry erase boards.

Written on the first board...

"NUMBER PATTERNS FROM SERMONS."

Numbers listed with brackets drawn to isolate certain series.

On the next board...

Longitudes and latitudes in a list. Printed signs have been taped next to each, identifying the locations they represent:

"WHITE HOUSE, OK CITY, SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA, ATLANTA..."

On the last board...

A MAP OF THE UNITED STATES with Post-its charting Alton's progress across the Southeast.

"RANCH, MOTEL, STATE TROOPER, SATELLITE."

Sevier's eyes move back and forth across the boards until finally locking in on the one in front of him. He stiffens.

CONTINUED:

SEVIER
He’s not going to Atlanta.

The sleeping staffer mumbles in the b.g.

SEVIER
These places don’t matter. He was looking for a common language.

Sevier stands and approaches the board.

Uncapping a marker, he begins to circle random coordinates in the list of longitudes and latitudes.

Finished, he cocks his head.

He backs up and sits on his chair, never taking his eyes off the board. He smiles.

SEVIER
Remarkable.

Suddenly, a door opens and LINDA, a young staffer, walks in balancing a cup of coffee on a stack of folders.

LINDA
They lost them in the National Forest. They want to move us to an office in Tampa.

SEVIER
Doesn’t matter.

LINDA
What?

SEVIER
I know where they’re going.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lucas tears a piece of duct tape off the roll.

He stands at the window in a second-story motel room, hanging the pieces of cardboard up. A bright sodium light shines through from the landing outside.

Sarah sits on the closest of two beds with her back against the headboard. She works a remote, bouncing between news stations on the television checking for information.

Frustrated, she powers off the TV and throws down the remote.

CONTINUED:

SARAH
Roy will get him here.

LUCAS
If he's not dead.

This strikes Sarah. Lucas notices.

LUCAS
I'm sorry.

SARAH
Roy won't let that happen.

LUCAS
I hope not.

Lucas continues hanging the cardboard.

SARAH
You don't believe what Roy believes.

LUCAS
It doesn't matter. Good people die every day believing in something.

The room is getting darker as Lucas covers the window.

SARAH
Roy lived two years having to watch another man raise his son. He did what I couldn't. He'll do anything to get him here.

The room goes dark as Lucas hangs the last piece of cardboard over the window. Sarah clicks on the lamp next to the bed.

LUCAS
Get some rest. No one's coming with the sun up.

Lucas lies down on the other bed and puts his arm over his face.

Sarah turns on the muted TV. She leans her head back, wondering where her son is.

EXT. FOREST - CLEARING - PREDAWN

Quiet. A light blue haze hangs over the forest.

CONTINUED:

Roy kneels in dense treeline with Alton. They stare out across a large clearing.

He looks at his son. Both are scared, but Alton nods. He's ready. Roy stands.

He picks Alton up, cradling him on his hip. Taking a breath, he steps out into the clearing.

His feet trample shin-high grass as they near the center of the field. Stopping there, they are fully exposed.

Roy's breathing is rapid. His eyes dart along the horizon, searching for the first signs of light.

ALTON
Dad?

Roy looks down to Alton staring up at him.

ALTON
It's okay.

He is struck by how calm Alton seems. Roy nods, steeling himself. He faces the Eastern horizon and waits for the sun.

SUNLIGHT BREAKS THROUGH THE TREELINE.

Alton buries his head into his dad's chest. Roy wraps him in his arms, lowering his own head as if bracing for impact.

Alton's body begins to shake. Roy keeps his grip.

Though Alton's eyes are hidden, a BLOOM OF LIGHT appears, streaking out from his face.

Alton's body trembles. Roy struggles to hold him.

The forest floor begins to vibrate. Trees creaking.

The rumbling intensifies. Earthshaking.

The ground near their feet fissures. Cracking open.

Roy keeps his grip.

The cacophony builds, and builds, until...

AN EXPLOSION OF ENERGY.

An ethereal force that expands from where they stand.

CONTINUED:

Stretching out into the surrounding forest, its edges hang in the air at a distant perimeter.

Inside that perimeter, a stillness overtakes everything.

Roy finds himself on his knees, having been brought down by the blast. Gathering himself, he barely sees Alton's shape stepping away from him.

Roy lifts his head to find A NEW WORLD.

The forest and clearing he's standing in are at once identical but also different. What had been cold, barren trees are now lush and filled with leaves.

His eyes drift up, taking in a GIANT MONOLITHIC STRUCTURE.

It stands in the field only paces away. It's beautiful. A single piece of stone, not formed naturally, but elegantly shaped with a curving trunk that builds to a geometric arch.

Roy walks to it. He places his hand on it, running along the smooth, highly-polished surface.

In the distance, he sees a brilliant skyline over the trees. Architecturally startling structures lining the horizon. The roof of one opens, peeling back like petals.

Alton, seen only from behind, stands in the field staring out at this as well. Before Roy can call out to him, something catches his eye.

A point of light in the treeline. It moves.

Roy sees a FIGURE step out from the trees, then ANOTHER.

There are HUMANOID FIGURES obscured by a point of light being emitted form the center of their chests. The detail of their bodies is lost in a kind of silhouette. Only basic movements are perceptible behind the streaks of flaring light.

MORE FIGURES APPEAR.

HUNDREDS, at varying distances, seeming to congregate around them. Watching them.

Roy stands in awe. His eyes lock on one figure. It raises its arm as if to wave. Then...

THE ENERGY FIELD COLLAPSES.

CONTINUED:

The perimeter snaps back in on itself as quickly as it appeared. A residual shockwave leaves swaying trees.

Roy lifts his head, having covered up during the collapse.

He stands in the clearing, returned to its normal state save for the broken ground at his feet.

Alton stands several feet away. He turns to Roy, who finds himself awestruck again.

Alton looks PERFECTLY HEALTHY. His cheeks full and flush with color. His eyes bright. Roy can't believe the change.

Alton smiles at him. Sheer amazement.

Roy can't take his eyes off him.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY (LATER)

The peephole on the motel room door.

With the window covered, time is lost. The lamp still gives the only light in the room.

Lucas has fallen asleep sprawled across the made bed. Sarah is curled up facing the covered window.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

Lucas snaps awake, reaching for the pistol at his back. Sarah sits up.

Lucas checks the clock: "03:47 PM."

LUCAS
It's still daylight.

Lucas approaches the door, motioning Sarah to stay put. He pulls his pistol and checks the peephole.

LUCAS
Jesus.

Lucas pulls open the door. Bright sunlight floods in.

Roy stands in the doorway with Alton.

Lucas immediately notices the change in Alton's appearance. He stands speechless.

CONTINUED:

ROY
He has something to tell you.

Lucas steps aside as Alton and Roy enter the room. Lucas shakes his head in disbelief.

LUCAS
He looks...

Roy shuts the door behind them.

Sarah stands by the bed. Alton walks to her and she kneels down to study his face.

SARAH
You look wonderful.

He smiles at her. She hugs him.

Roy tosses the duffle bag down and walks to the sink. He rinses his face. His back to the room.

LUCAS
It’s still daylight.

ROY
Yeah.

LUCAS
No goggles.

Alton looks up at him and smiles. He shakes his head “NO.” The goggles hang loose around his neck.

ALTON
Lucas. Do you want to sit down?

Lucas nods, still processing. He moves to the bed.

He and Sarah take seats there in front of Alton. Roy wipes a towel across his face and leans against the wall behind them.

ALTON
I saw the sunrise this morning. I think I know why I’m here.

Alton holds up a flat hand, knuckle-side up.

ALTON
There is a world built on top of ours.

He raises his other hand and holds it over the first.

CONTINUED:

ALTON
People live there.

He holds his palm up. IT BEGINS TO GLOW.

ALTON
I think they're like me.

HIS EYES BEGIN TO GLOW, but it's controlled. Almost subtle.

ALTON
Most people can't see them, or their world, but they can see us. I think they want to talk to us but don't know how. I think that's why I'm here, to help you see them.

His eyes return to normal. The glow in his palm fades into the veins running up his arm.

Sarah turns to Roy. He nods.

ROY
We saw it.

Sarah nods back. She turns to Alton again.

SARAH
They're like you?

ALTON
Yes. I think so.

SARAH
And being in this place, with these people, how did you feel?

ALTON
I was happy.

Sarah thinks on this. Her answer seems reluctant.

SARAH
I understand.

ALTON
Lucas?

Lucas' eyes are cast down in thought. After a moment, he looks up at Alton.

LUCAS
I believe you.

CONTINUED:

Alton smiles.

ALTON
Good.

Lucas snorts out a laugh.

LUCAS
All right.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY (LATER)

Sarah stands outside the closed bathroom door. The shower runs inside.

SARAH
You okay in there?

ALTON (O.S.)
Yeah.

Sarah moves into the room where Roy stands over his bag on the bed. He changes into a fresh shirt.

Lucas is in the corner with his own shirt unbuttoned, adjusting his Kevlar vest.

SARAH
Roy. I need to talk to you.

ROY
Okay.

SARAH
It's about tomorrow.

Sarah looks to Lucas, who can't help but be included in this. She continues as Roy buttons his shirt.

SARAH
This world you saw. It didn't last very long.

ROY
Seconds.

SARAH
Those people were there, and then gone.

ROY
Yeah. What are you asking?

Sarah hesitates. She's nervous.

CONTINUED:

SARAH
What if Alton doesn't belong with us?

Roy stops what he's doing. He stares at her.

SARAH
I think we need to consider that, come tomorrow, he may be gone.

ROY
You don't know that.

SARAH
You're right. I don't.

Roy turns to the duffle bag. Sarah looks at Lucas, who averts her eyes, uncomfortable in the room.

ROY
I don't need to hear this.

The bathroom door opens.

ALTON
I'm out.

Alton emerges from the bathroom and goes to the sink to brush his teeth.

Sarah watches Roy, but he won't look at her. He keeps his attention on the duffle bag.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Lucas and Alton stand near the door as Sarah finishes packing.

LUCAS
So what color was it?

ALTON
Red. Then orange.

Roy grabs his bag and steps to the door.

ROY
Okay.

LUCAS
So tell me again...

Lucas opens the door with Roy on his heels. Alton follows close behind as Sarah gathers the last bag.

INT./EXT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Lucas steps out of the room onto the second story landing.

LUCAS
You really just walked out...

BOOM!

Lucas flies back against the threshold and crashes into the cement landing.

Roy shoves Alton inside and slams the door to lock him in.

BOOM!

Debris flies, forcing Roy to the ground.

BOOM! BOOM!

Doak advances down the balcony relentlessly firing a semi-auto shotgun from the hip.

Roy pulls his pistol and gets TWO SHOTS off.

ONE HITS.

It strikes Doak in the belly, causing him to stumble to a knee. The shotgun dangles in his right hand.

Lucas is laid out clutching his chest and sucking air.

Roy stands, footsteps rushing up the stairwell behind him. He turns and is met with a bullet that clips his neck.

This drops Roy. His hands fly to his neck as blood pours through his fingers.

Levi appears atop the stairwell with a pistol leveled.

Roy tries to push himself up, but his hand slips on the slick concrete. Levi reaches him.

He yanks Roy’s arms away from his neck. He pulls a zip tie from his back pocket and binds Roy’s hands behind him. With another tie, he lashes Roy to the metal balcony railing.

Levi moves to Lucas, again pulling back the arms. Lucas cries out in pain as Levi fastens another tie.

CONTINUED:

Doak arrives and stands at the door to the room. Using the shotgun, he blows the hinges out. A final blast through the handle and Doak must lean against he wall for support.

Levi steps up and kicks the door in, lifting it entirely off its frame.

INSIDE

The room is empty.

Levi stomps in and flips over a mattress.

Nothing.

He peeks under the second bed. Nothing.

Doak enters, favoring his side. He grabs a pillow from the floor and slips off the case.

Levi kicks in the bathroom door.

Sarah screams.

She and Alton are trapped in the tub. She lies on top of Alton, her arms wrapped around him.

Levi grabs her by the hair and pulls back.

OUTSIDE

Roy strains against the metal railing. The ties dig into his wrists as Sarah's screaming continues from inside.

IN THE BATHROOM

Levi and Doak attempt to pry Sarah and Alton apart. Levi jerks her away, giving Doak a chance to lift the kicking boy from the tub.

ALTON
NO!

Alton's eyes FLARE WITH LIGHT.

Doak quickly throws the pillowcase over Alton's head and carries him out.

SARAH
Alton!

CONTINUED:

Levi manages to zip tie Sarah's hands to a metal bar in the shower wall. He walks out.

Sarah yanks against the bar with all her weight.

OUTSIDE

Doak hands Alton off to Levi, who immediately rushes the boy down the stairwell.

Doak pauses to catch his breath before stepping over Lucas. Roy bucks against the railing. Blood soaking his chest.

IN THE BATHROOM

Sarah yanks against the shower bar. The drywall is cracking. A final pull and the bar breaks free from the wall.

She rushes outside, her hands still bound.

OUTSIDE

Sarah reaches the balcony in time to see Levi's truck speeding out of the parking lot.

LUCAS
My boot. In my boot.

Sarah rushes over to Lucas who holds out his leg. She pulls a folding knife from his boot and frees Lucas' hands.

He winces and tears open his shirt in order to loosen the Kevlar vest. He takes short, pained breaths.

She goes to Roy and cuts him loose. He immediately gets to his feet and rushes down the stairwell toward the Isuzu.

Sarah helps Lucas up. He cuts her tie and they follow.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/PARKING LOT/INTERSTATE - MOMENTS LATER

Lucas barely gets the passenger door closed before Roy tears out of the motel parking lot.

Sarah's in the back.

CONTINUED:

SARAH
They took the interstate.

The Isuzu careens out of the lot, cutting off traffic as it races toward a nearby on-ramp.

Lucas takes a hand from his pained side just long enough to check the chamber on his pistol.

LUCAS
I'm sorry, Roy. I didn't see them.

Roy doesn't answer. His eyes are dead set on the road. A vicious sight with the drying blood at his neck.

The car weaves around traffic as the speedometer charges over 100 miles per hour. The RPM whining.

Suddenly --

Roy is forced to slam on the brakes. He skids to a stop at the back bumper of a line of cars. Traffic stacks up ahead.

Roy downshifts and guns it across the right lane toward the shoulder. The Isuzu tires scream along the cut shoulder.

They fly past a growing line of bumper-to-bumper traffic, but their path is blocked ahead.

A HUMVEE WITH FOUR NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS POSTED IN FRONT.

The soldiers see the Isuzu approaching. One steps out with his hand raised to stop. He motions them back into traffic.

Roy slows the car, but points the wheels down the grassy incline to try and maneuver around.

The SOLDIER walks straight up to their front bumper.

SOLDIER
Hey! Hey! I said stop, asshole!

He slaps his hand on the hood and waves him back into the line of traffic.

SOLDIER
Move!

Roy is desperate. He hesitates. The other soldiers approach with their hands on their weapons.

CONTINUED:

SOLDIER
MOVE!

SARAH
Roy!

Roy relents, slowly steering his way back into traffic. Lucas eyes the soldiers, the pistol by his knee.

They settle into the line of cars when...

TWO HELICOPTERS rush over the top of their car.

Everyone ducks to watch them pass.

Flying low, the helicopters bank around an oncoming curve and fall out of sight.

Sarah leans back, worried. Lucas looks to Roy, who stares ahead blankly, but his hands are white knuckled on the wheel.

The Isuzu inches along. Everyone is silent.

As they round the corner --

HELICOPTERS, STATE POLICE, MILITARY PERSONNEL.

Two helicopters are circling as ANOTHER lifts off from the grass median and disappears over the trees.

HUMVEES AND NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS have a perimeter established extending from the center of the interstate.

All lanes are blocked. Traffic is being re-directed to the shoulder.

Their eyes are locked on the approaching scene. They come alongside it to find...

LEVI'S TRUCK SITTING AT THE CENTER OF IT ALL.

The doors are open. A blood smear across the inside of the passenger door window.

NO ONE IS INSIDE.

NO SIGN of Doak, Levi, or Alton. They've vanished.

IN THE ISUZU

Silence.

CONTINUED:

Sarah is pressed against the back window. Her hand covers her mouth. Her eyes dart around frantically searching, but still nothing. Her eyes drop, the reality sinking in.

Lucas takes in the activity. He looks at Roy, wanting to say something, but doesn't.

Roy's face is blank. Nothing.

The car inches past it all as the sun begins to set.

EXT. BUS TERMINAL - NIGHT

It's a clear night.

Roy, Sarah, and Lucas are at the edge of a large Greyhound bus terminal located off a busy road. There isn't much else around save for a bank of pay phones off to the side.

Roy sits on the hood of the Isuzu as Sarah cleans the wound at his neck. A grocery bag of supplies open next to her.

Lucas paces, favoring his right side.

LUCAS
FBI. CIA. Homeland Security. Someone has him. Someone knows where she is. The FBI has field offices. We start there...

ROY
We won't find him.

Lucas stops pacing. He doesn't challenge this.

Roy looks at Sarah.

ROY
He's gone.

He takes in her eyes, her face. His expression softens for a moment, but then changes.

ROY
The only thing I've ever believed in was Alton. And I failed him.

Sarah wants to reach out to him, but doesn't.

Roy stands and walks to the edge of the busy road. He watches bright headlights streak past.

CONTINUED:

A semi passes, the force of which moves him in his place.

INT. MacDILL AIRFORCE BASE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sevier walks briskly down a linoleum hallway amidst a TEAM OF PEOPLE. FBI AGENTS, MILITARY OFFICIALS, NSA STAFFERS.

They approach an office door with an ARMED SOLDIER out front. The soldier steps aside allowing the group access.

INT. MacDILL AIRFORCE BASE - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

It's a second story office with windows looking onto the tarmac, which is lit up at night. The room is empty save for folding chairs that line the walls.

The group filters in. The chairs fill up around the room leaving others to stand.

Sevier is by the door behind TWO MILITARY OFFICIALS whispering to themselves. He maneuvers for a better view.

Alton sits alone in the center of the room.

A tripod and video camera are stationed next to him. His head is down, and he's wearing the goggles.

SHARON, a woman in her mid-40s, brings a folding chair from the edge of the room and takes a seat in front of Alton. She studies a legal pad in her lap.

SHARON
Hello, Alton, my name is Sharon Davis. I'm a childhood development counselor. I consult with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, but I am not in law enforcement. I need to ask you some questions okay?

Alton keeps his head down.

SHARON
There was a crash at a gas station you were at. Do you remember that?

Nothing.

CONTINUED:

SHARON
Do you know what crashed?

More nothing. Sharon shifts in her seat, checks her notes.

SHARON
Who has been with you the last few days?

She waits for an answer. Still nothing.

SHARON
Have you been with your father?

Alton says something under his breath.

SHARON
I'm sorry? I didn't hear that.

He mumbles something again.

SHARON
I'm sorry, can you say that louder?

Alton raises his head, looking at her through the goggles.

ALTON
Paul.

SHARON
Who is that? Your father?

ALTON
I want to talk to Paul Sevier.

Everyone in the room turns to look at Sevier, who is stuck in the corner near the door.

He is obviously surprised. He takes a few tentative steps forward into the room.

SEVIER
My name's...

ALTON
Paul Sevier. Lead Operations Analyst.

SEVIER
They just gave me that title.

CONTINUED:

Sevier turns to the group, who whisper amongst themselves.

ALTON
I'll speak to him.

Sharon turns in her seat and finds Agent Miller in a chair along the wall. He nods.

SHARON
Okay, Alton. I look forward to maybe talking with you in the future.

She stands and offers her seat to Sevier, who looks flummoxed. He moves to the chair as Sharon retreats back near the wall. He sits.

SEVIER
Uh, the place you and your father were trying to get to, what's the significance of that location?

Alton doesn't answer. Instead, he turns to look at the people behind him. He looks around the room at them all.

Sevier turns to look at the group. He points at them.

SEVIER
It's them. You don't want to talk in front of them?

Alton shakes his head "no." Sevier turns to the group and holds up his hands.

Agent Miller considers this. He stands.

AGENT MILLER
Okay. Everybody out.

He leads the group out of the room.

Sevier and Alton watch until the last person is gone and the door is shut. They are alone.

He turns back to Alton.

SEVIER
Okay. So where do we start?

Alton still doesn't speak. He looks over to the video camera running next to him. A blinking red light.

Sevier watches as the blinking light stops.

CONTINUED:

SEVIER
That's impressive.

Alton faces him.

SEVIER
You know, I have to say, I've really been looking forward to meeting you.

They stare at one another for a long moment.

Sevier leans back and crosses his legs. He runs a hand through his beard. He appears to be calculating something.

He holds up a finger. Then points at Alton's goggles.

SEVIER
May I?

Alton nods.

Sevier takes a deep breath. He leans forward slowly. His arms cautiously reach out for the goggles.

The room begins to FILL WITH LIGHT.

INT. MacDILL AIR FORCE BASE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS ACTION

The group of officers and officials stand in the hallway outside the room. Quiet chatter amongst them.

Agent Miller leans against the wall, anxious.

The fluorescent lights above them dim for a moment. It's barely noticeable.

Agent Miller looks up at them, but then returns to his thoughts.

EXT. BUS TERMINAL - NIGHT

Roy hasn't moved from his place beside the busy road. Headlights wash over him as traffic continues to pass.

Lucas and Sarah sit on the hood of the car parked in the lot behind him. They are quiet.

A phone begins to ring in the distance. No one notices.

Roy looks at the sky. His eyes filling with tears. He drops his head and wipes a hand across his face.

CONTINUED:

ANOTHER PHONE BEGINS TO RING. It alternates with the first.

This catches Roy's attention. He turns.

At the edge of the parking lot, there is the bank of five pay phones. A THIRD BEGINS TO RING.

Roy looks to Sarah and Lucas, who climb off the hood, also watching the phones.

Roy approaches.

He stops in front of the phones as ALL FIVE BEGIN RINGING. It's a chorus.

Roy walks towards them and reaches out. As he lifts up one of the receivers...

THEY ALL STOP RINGING.

Roy brings the phone to his ear.

ROY
Hello?

SEVIER (V.O.)
(through the phone)
Is this Roy Tillar?

ROY
Yes.

SEVIER (V.O.)
(through the phone)
I have your son.

Roy turns to Sarah. His eyes wide.

EXT. SOUTHWEST TAMPA APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

Sevier follows several steps behind Alton. The boy leads them off a city street and into the parking lot of an apartment complex.

Sevier has his cell phone to his ear. He carries a torn piece of paper with numbers scrawled on it.

SEVIER
(into the phone)
Yes. He's fine. I'm bringing him to you. Do you have something to write with?

CONTINUED:

Sevier looks around at their new location. He holds the phone out.

SEVIER
Alton?

Alton doesn't answer. He heads for a car parked in a space nearby. It's a Toyota Prius.

SEVIER
(into the phone)
You ready? 29 degrees, 4 minutes, 31 seconds north.

Sevier watches as Alton approaches the Prius.

The door locks POP OPEN.

Alton climbs in the back. Sevier goes to the driver's door.

SEVIER
82 degrees. 41 minutes, 48 seconds west. I'll have him there in two hours. Goodbye.

Sevier hangs up the phone and scans the parking lot. No one around.

He slams the phone onto the asphalt. It shatters. He kicks the pieces under the car next to them and climbs in.

INT./EXT. PRIUS/APARTMENT COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS ACTION

Sevier settles in behind the wheel. As he buckles his seat belt, the vehicle STARTS WITH A BEEP.

Sevier turns to Alton, who is slouched in the backseat.

SEVIER
You can ride up front.

ALTON
It's better if I'm back here.

Sevier nods. He places the car in gear and backs out of the parking space.

EXT. MacDILL AIR FORCE BASE - TARMAC - NIGHT

The entire base is in a blackout.

CONTINUED:

Agent Miller walks across the expansive tarmac at the center of the base with several MILITARY OFFICERS and other AGENTS. Flashlights are the only points of light available to them.

AGENT MILLER
What about the backup generators?

MILITARY OFFICER
They've all failed. I've never seen anything like it.

AGENT MILLER
And the exits?

MILITARY OFFICER
We have three. The gates to each were opened. We can't get them closed without power.

Suddenly, all the power is restored to the base.

The group stops as runway lights trail on, revealing massive hangars bordering the now brightly-lit tarmac.

Agent Miller looks over to one of the hangars with its giant bay doors open.

Inside, an ENTIRE COMPANY OF NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS.

Over 100 soldiers in full combat gear surrounded by humvees. Multiple helicopters sit nearby.

The soldiers scramble in the newfound light.

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - DAWN

The sun breaks the horizon over a distant treeline.

Roy, Sarah, and Lucas stand beside the Isuzu. It's parked on the shoulder of a deserted road bordered by fields.

Lucas holds the shotgun by his side. Roy's pistol is drawn.

In the distance, the Prius appears.

Roy steps forward in anticipation. Lucas by his side. Roy references Sarah.

ROY
Let us go first.

CONTINUED:

She nods. Roy and Lucas move ahead as the Prius pulls onto the shoulder several yards away.

Sevier climbs out. Roy and Lucas stop. They stare at one another from this distance.

Sevier turns as the back door opens. Alton steps out.

Alton runs to Roy, embracing his legs. Roy kneels, inspecting the boy.

ROY
You're okay?

ALTON
Yes.

Roy brings him into a hug.

Lucas eyes Sevier, who hovers nearby.

SARAH
Alton.

Sarah approaches. Roy releases the boy to his mother. Sarah hugs him tight.

Roy stands to face Sevier.

SEVIER
I decoded the same number pattern you found in the sermons. They know where you're going. They'll have every road blocked with a five mile perimeter set up. It will be nearly impossible to get through.

Alton moves next to Roy.

ALTON
I can help.

Roy turns and lead Alton and Sarah back to the car. Lucas lingers. Sevier shouts after them.

SEVIER
Can I come with you?

Roy speaks without turning.

ROY
No.

Sevier looks at Lucas, notices a holster on his belt.

CONTINUED:

SEVIER
Are those handcuffs?

Lucas nods.

SEVIER
Do you mind?

Lucas removes the handcuffs and tosses them to Sevier.

SEVIER
Is it too much to ask you to punch me in the face?

Lucas looks at him curiously.

SEVIER
Forget it.

Sevier turns back to the car. Lucas goes to catch the others.

At the Prius, Sevier turns in time to see the Isuzu pull away. He watches as they disappear into the distance.

Sevier looks around, studies the vacant fields. He looks up at the morning sky.

The sound of the handcuffs snapping shut.

Sevier has cuffed his hands behind his back. He settles onto the ground by the front bumper of the car.

He sits alone by the road. Waiting.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CULVERT - DAY

A military helicopter flies over a rural two-lane highway.

Roy peeks out from a large culvert that runs under the highway as the helicopter passes overhead.

He turns back into the culvert where the Isuzu is parked.

Lucas studies a map spread across the hood.

Sarah and Alton are at the rear. She kneels, helping Alton strap on Roy's Kevlar vest. It swallows him.

Roy approaches and grabs a roll of duct tape out of the car. He goes to Alton, tearing off a long strip.

CONTINUED:

ROY
It needs to be tighter.

Roy begins taping the vest at the side to fit more snug around the boy. Sarah stands watching.

Roy finishes with the tape and sizes up his work.

ROY
How's that feel?

ALTON
Good.

Roy affixes one last piece of tape for good measure.

ALTON
Dad?

ROY
Yes.

ALTON
Are you scared?

Roy stops with the vest. He sees Alton is looking at him.

ROY
Yes.

ALTON
You don't have to worry about me.

ROY
I like worrying about me.

ALTON
You don't need to, anymore.

This strikes Roy. He has to gather himself.

ROY
I'll always worry about you, Alton. That's the deal.

Alton just stares at him. His eyes are wise beyond their years.

Roy looks up to Sarah. She gives a reluctant smile.

Roy stands and reaches back into the car. He removes Lucas' vest. He flips it over, studying a dent caved into the material in the front.

CONTINUED:

He touches his hand to it and shakes his head. He looks over to Lucas, who still studies the map.

Roy turns to Sarah and hands her the vest.

ROY
Can you get this on?

She nods and begins strapping it to her chest.

ROY
You'll have to move fast once we stop.

SARAH
I understand.

They look at one another.

Sarah hugs him. He reciprocates. She holds out her hand to bring Alton in.

Lucas watches the family together.

He sees Roy break off and walk toward him. He looks back down at the map.

LUCAS
There has to be a better way in.

ROY
There's not.

Roy opens the passenger door and removes the shotgun.

ROY
You've done enough for us. We can do this alone.

LUCAS
No.

Lucas folds up the map. He reaches for the pistol in the back of his pants and winces in pain. He grits his teeth and grabs his side. He removes the pistol.

LUCAS
Are you driving.

Roy nods.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CULVERT - DAY

The Isuzu pulls up the incline that connects the culvert to the highway.

The tires spit dirt as they roar onto the pavement.

The vehicle charges down the highway.

EXT. RURAL ROAD (FOREST) - AERIAL VIEW (MOVING) - DAY

TRACKING LOW OVER a rural road that runs between sparse forests of longleaf pines speckled with waist-high underbrush and palmettos.

As the road dead ends into a brackish swamp, this vantage point RISES to show a vast landscape of forest and swamp stitched together by a series of highways and back roads.

Military helicopters patrol the skies.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/HIGHWAY/COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Roy slows the Isuzu as they approach an intersection of the highway and a smaller rural road.

ALTON
This is it.

LUCAS
You sure?

Roy stops the car. Lucas studies the empty road.

ALTON
It has the fewest soldiers.

Roy turns to Sarah and Alton in the backseat.

ROY
Get down on the floor.
(to Sarah)
Cover him up.

Alton lies down and Sarah gets over him.

Lucas checks his pistol as Roy turns onto the road.

The car gains speed.

Everyone is quiet. Roy and Lucas watch the developing terrain ahead.

CONTINUED:

A slight crest in the road reveals a new sight line.

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD --

An IMPROVISED ROADBLOCK appears several miles ahead.

TWO HUMVEES angle in toward the center of the road bordering wooden blockades strung with concertina wire.

FIVE ARMED SOLDIERS guard on foot beside the vehicles.

Lucas looks out his window at the swamp flying by.

LUCAS
No room on the shoulder. Water.

Roy shifts into fifth gear as the speedometer climbs.

On the floorboard, Alton jostles under Sarah.

ALTON
They've seen you.

LUCAS
We know.

Ahead, the soldiers can be seen scrambling to the edges of their vehicles and crouching to firing positions.

The roadblock is quickly approaching. The sound of their rumbling engine grows louder.

ALTON
Don't shoot at them! They can only return fire!

Lucas grips the edge of his seat.

The speedometer breaks 90.

Roy runs the car down the center stripe.

Sarah locks her feet against the door, bracing around Alton.

The roadblock flies toward them.

SMASH!

Chaos.

Airbags deploy. Windows shatter. Tires burst.

Roy and Lucas are hurled forward.

CONTINUED:

Fiberglass panels crumple as the wooden barricades slam into the side of the car slung by the tangled razor wire.

Sarah and Alton are showered in tempered glass.

Skinning past the humvees, rubber tread explodes as the tires rip over spike strips.

The Isuzu enters a skid.

The velocity carries the car some 50 yards beyond the barricade before finally coming to rest.

A relative quiet.

The Isuzu sputters, maintaining an idle.

Roy, his face cut and bloodied, raises up and immediately stuffs the deflated airbag between his legs.

ROY
Alton?!

SARAH
We’re okay.

Roy turns to see the soldiers gathering by the humvees with weapons raised. They approach the car.

Roy throws the car into reverse.

The tires spin, losing tread.

The car suddenly lurches backward. The front bumper is ripped off, tangled in the barbed wire, but the car is free.

Roy slams it into gear and tears away, leaving the soldiers scrambling for their vehicles.

The Isuzu disappears around a bend in the road.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/COUNTRY ROAD/FOREST - DAY

The swamp along the road has turned to dense forest as tall pines sail past outside.

Thump! Thump! Thump!

The deflated tires struggle on the asphalt as Roy pushes the car faster down the road.

Lucas shoves the airbag down as he searches for his pistol. He finds it on the floorboard.

CONTINUED:

ROY
You there?

LUCAS
Yeah.

ROY
Alton?

Sarah picks herself up using the backseat, allowing Alton to sit up. They shake off broken glass.

Alton's eyes drift up. He's following something. He speaks to himself, almost inaudible.

ALTON
Here.

ROY
What?

ALTON
HERE!

Roy slams on the brakes.

The anti-locking chubs as the car slides to a stop.

Sarah leaps out, reaching back inside for Alton. She helps him down and they run for the treeline.

Roy watches. They are almost out of sight when suddenly --

ROY
ALTON!

Alton stops, turns back. Roy and Alton lock eyes.

Sarah rushes back to Alton. She takes his hand. The look is broken as they rush into the trees.

They are gone.

Roy stares after them.

He turns back to the wheel. Lucas looks at the road ahead.

LUCAS
Okay.

Roy puts the car in gear and they speed away.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Sarah and Alton sprint through the underbrush dodging the trees and palmettos.

Alton takes the lead, guiding them through the forest.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/COUNTRY ROAD (MOVING) - DAY

Roy wrestles the steering wheel.

ROY
The steering's going.

LUCAS
That tread comes off it'll get a lot harder.

A military helicopter banks in from their left side. Lucas turns to watch it circle back on their vehicle.

Roy sees in the rearview, through a busted back window, the two humvees from the roadblock emerge behind them.

EXT. FOREST/MARSHLAND - DAY

Sarah sees Alton break into a broad clearing ahead.

He stops at a high point, marshland reaches out for miles ahead of him.

Sarah stops just outside the treeline several yards away. She watches him.

He scans the horizon. Searching for something.

He looks up. The sun is high.

Things are quiet.

A light wind pushes tall grass. Alton closes his eyes, warming his face in the light.

His eyes open.

He turns back to Sarah. They stare at one another.

Alton is calm.

His eyes FILL WITH LIGHT.

The ground begins to SHAKE.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/COUNTRY ROAD/HIGHWAY (MOVING) - DAY

The Isuzu flies off the country road as it slides in a sharp turn onto a vacant highway.

The humvees are gaining.

THREE OTHER HUMVEES barrel down the highway. All in pursuit.

The highway opens up into flat land with long horizons.

Multiple HELICOPTERS now circle the chase.

IN THE ISUZU

Lucas leans forward tracking the helicopters.

LUCAS
Can't keep this up.

Roy has the pedal topped out, but is losing speed as the humvees charge forward.

The tread on the front tire rips free. Bare metal to road.

Roy wrestles the wheel.

Sparks fly.

EXT. FOREST/MARSHLAND - DAY

The ground shifts under Sarah's feet.

She stumbles, falling on her knees.

Alton, his eyes ABLAZE, holds out a hand to her. His palms begin to GLOW.

Sarah reaches out to him. Light flares from his hands.

The forest behind her trembles. Trees creaking. A flock of birds scatter toward the sky.

The light coming from Alton's eyes and palms intensifies as the ground splits open around him.

Alton's hands begin to vibrate. This moves up his arms. He tries to control it, leaving his hands out to Sarah.

The Kevlar vest strapped to his chest bursts apart. Shredded into pieces around him.

CONTINUED:

More violent than before...

AN EXPLOSION OF ENERGY.

The force is such that it blows Sarah backward, throwing her toward the trees.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/HIGHWAY (MOVING) - DAY

Roy and Lucas duck as THE ENERGY FORCE blows across the charging Isuzu. Glass and debris fly.

THROUGH the windshield, helicopters can be seen tilting in the sky.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF SOUTHERN UNITED STATES - DAY

A drifting satellite view of Florida and the Southern United States.

The energy field is visible spreading out from the central Gulf Coast of Florida.

The force grows, reaching up into Georgia, Alabama and out into the Gulf of Mexico.

EXT. FOREST/MARSHLAND - DAY

Sarah lifts her head off the ground.

Her eyes go wide at the sight.

She stands at THE CENTER OF A BEAUTIFUL CITY.

The marshland and forest still exist. None of that landscape has changed, but built around it, as if the structures naturally gestated from this place, the city rises up.

Stilted buildings tower into the sky. Massive architectural sails, sturdy yet fluid, open up around the structures.

A flock of birds lands on cables stretched across a network of suspended bridges.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/HIGHWAY (MOVING) - DAY

As the Isuzu continues to speed down the highway, Lucas' lips part as he stares through the windshield.

CONTINUED:

A GIANT ARCH bridges the highway ahead. In the distance, the same kind of buildings line the horizon.

Roy studies the sky. Amongst the military helicopters are other, STRANGE VEHICLES floating in place. Their reflective surfaces catching the sunlight.

Suddenly...

CHINK!

The metal wheel, spraying sparks against the road, snaps in on itself.

This slings the back end around.

The Isuzu ENTERS A VIOLENT ROLL.

Roy and Lucas are slung against their seat belts inside.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF SOUTHERN UNITED STATES - DAY

The satellite view shows the energy field slowing.

It now stretches deep into the Gulf of Mexico, up toward the base of South Carolina and into the edges of Mississippi.

The expansion stops. It hangs in the air like a held breath.

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - DAY

Sevier, still handcuffed in front of the Prius, carries his eyes from buildings on the distant horizon to the field next to him.

A giant stairway, carved from stone, curves toward a series of sculpted archways.

EXT. OIL RIG IN THE GULF OF MEXICO - DAY

A DOZEN WORKERS walk away from their equipment on the metal platform of an oil rig stationed in the Gulf.

Some remove goggles as they stare up at a series of buildings protruding from the water.

EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

A WOMAN pushing her groceries out of the store joins OTHERS as they stare up at silhouetted buildings rising up across the parking lot, blocking the sun.

INT./EXT. OFFICE BUILDING/DOWNTOWN- DAY

A MAN in a tie stands from his desk and approaches his large office window.

Outside --

A foreign structure built onto the existing man-made building across the street opens as massive panels retract.

In the man's building, HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE line the windows in observance of the sight.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The Isuzu continues its roll.

Landing upside-down, the crumpled car skids to a stop on its roof. The wreckage still and silent.

Behind it, the humvees have stopped.

SOLDIERS climb out of their vehicles staring at the new structures that surround them.

EXT. FOREST/MARSHLAND - DAY

Sarah turns back to the forest. The base of buildings wrap through the trees in perfect concert with the landscape.

The ILLUMINATED FIGURES appear amongst the trees. Dozens.

Sarah is taken aback. She turns to find Alton.

Alton still stands in the marshland. His eyes and hands have returned to normal.

Behind him on the suspended bridges, THOUSANDS OF FIGURES appear. They emerge from the buildings, lining up to look out over the bridges at Alton.

Alton turns to see this.

CONTINUED:

Sarah stares up at them. She stiffens as the figures form the forest brush past her. Light streaking, obfuscating their bodies.

These figures walk to Alton. Surrounding him.

Sarah strains to keep her eyes on him. He's obscured in light.

Suddenly, Alton emerges from the group. The figures fall into semi-circle behind him.

Alton smiles at his mother. Sarah smiles back.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF SOUTHERN UNITED STATES - DAY

The energy field begins to quickly recede toward its source.

EXT. FOREST/MARSHLAND - DAY

Sarah watches as Alton's CHEST BEGINS TO GLOW.

A powerful light emits from his body.

Suddenly...

Sarah's back is met by the receding force with a powerful wind. She lowers her head as it rushes past.

WHOOSH!

Then silence. A stillness.

Sarah opens her eyes. She raises her head.

The marshland has returned to its normal state.

Alton is gone.

Sarah's eyes fill with tears, but she swallows this.

She listens to the quiet world around her. Taking in the place a final time, Sarah backs into the trees.

Turning, she disappears into the forest.

INT./EXT. ISUZU/HIGHWAY - DAY

The wrecked Isuzu remains still.

The soldiers near the humvees look around, speechless.

CONTINUED:

Their eyes soon fall on the heap of metal resting in the center of the highway. They don't move.

IN THE ISUZU

Roy's and Lucas' bodies hang limp upside down against their seat belts. Their faces bruised and bloodied.

Roy's hand moves.

His eyes open. He swallows, pained.

Roy takes in his new position. He looks to Lucas' body which remains still. He speaks in a strained voice.

ROY
You alive?

After a moment --

Lucas, with his eyes still closed, takes in a long breath.

LUCAS
Can we go back to Texas now?

This makes Roy smile.

EXT. HIGHWAY - AERIAL VIEW - DAY

DRIFTING ABOVE THE HIGHWAY.

The aerial view shows the soldiers still at their humvees, remaining there.

As the VANTAGE POINT RISES, MULTIPLE HUMVEES and SOLDIER TRANSPORTS converge on the site from both directions.

DOZENS OF SOLDIERS leap out of the vehicles, weapons raised, slowly approaching the wreck.

Helicopters move in, circling overhead.

Roy and Lucas are surrounded.

EXT. U.S. FLORENCE ADMAX PRISON YARD - LATE AFTERNOON

The high-security facility sits in the valley of a remote landscape. Mountain peaks are visible in the distance. This is definitely not Texas.

CONTINUED:

Massive guard towers sitting atop three-story-high concrete columns dot a razor wire fence line. They look like control towers you'd see at the airport.

INT. U.S. FLORENCE ADMAX - INTERROGATION ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Lucas sits handcuffed to a metal desk bolted to the floor of a stark, windowless interrogation room.

He wears an orange jumpsuit. Fluorescent lights buzz.

An exhausted-looking FBI AGENT sits in front of Lucas going over a typed transcript.

TWO OTHER MEN, one in military dress, stand by the wall observing.

FBI AGENT
You say he got out of the car with the birth mother, Sarah Adams?

LUCAS
Yes.

FBI AGENT
And where is she now?

LUCAS
Your guess is as good as mine.

FBI AGENT
You think they just walked away?

LUCAS
I didn't say that.

FBI AGENT
Explain how, with multiple types of aerial and ground surveillance surrounding the area, they could simply walk away, undetected.

LUCAS
I don't know, but if he didn't want you to see them, you wouldn't see 'em.

The Agent is incredulous.

LUCAS
Look, I can tell it to you as many times as you want. My story's not changing because it's true.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

LUCAS (CONT'D)
You know.
(to the military officer)
You all saw the same shit I saw.
(to the Agent)
But keep askin' if you want to.

FBI AGENT
I'm done. They've brought in a specialist to speak with you. I suggest you answer him more fully.

Lucas nods as the Agent exits the room. He stares at the two men left there. They are stone-faced.

After a moment, the door reopens.

Sevier enters holding a stack of folders. He exchanges whispers with the two observers before walking over to Lucas.

He takes a seat and smiles.

SEVIER
Hello. My name is Paul Sevier.

EXT. U.S. FLORENCE ADMAX PRISON YARD - LATE AFTERNOON

In the prison yard...

A HANDFUL OF INMATES, shackled at the hands and feet, walk around a small dirt track watched by HEAVILY-ARMED GUARDS.

Off to the side, in a small patch of grass, Roy stands alone.

He wears a hospital gown over an orange jumpsuit. His hands and ankles are shackled. Slippers on his feet.

TWO GUARDS, assigned solely to Roy, stand a few paces behind him. They are also heavily-armed.

Roy's head has been shaved and his scalp is covered with medical electrodes. An IV catheter is taped to the inside of the forearm.

Roy looks out at the mountain peaks on the horizon.

His eyes drift up to one of the immense guard towers nearby. They are strange, modern structures.

Roy focuses back on the mountains.

CONTINUED:

On the distant ridge line...

ONE OF THE BEAUTIFUL, OTHER WORLDLY STRUCTURES.

Roy squints at the waning daylight.

The sun will be setting soon.

FADE OUT.

THE END

THIS SCRIPT WAS PREPARED

BY WARNER BROS. PICTURES

SCRIPT PROCESSING DEPARTMENT

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